

## Fight, Swim, and Be Beautiful

Shupri Martin

Submit, Drown or Shamed: Living with anxiety is like...

### **An evil twin**

There are times when the twin tries to out-shine and out-do me. Like it needs to be bigger and better than me. If I win something, anxiety wants a rematch. If I acknowledge my accomplishments, anxiety highlights my struggles. **I feel** like I'm at war with myself.

There are times when the twin pries into my mind, it's so loud and powerful that I can't do anything but try to get it out of my head. I'm unable **to think** about life around me.

There are times when it doesn't bother me when I'm being out-done, out-shone or out-spoken by my twin, but most of the time it does. It's like being in the shadow of someone else. I choose **to act** like the better person but it's hard.

### **Being underwater**

There are times when the water gets too much for my body to handle. Like both my mind and body are forced to merge. The water hurts my eyes, and if I open my mouth I'll drown. **I feel** trapped into submission.

There are times when the water surrounds me like a cold blanket. Like something to keep me together but still suffocate my mind. I have to clear my head and remember to hold my breathe. I'm unable **to think** about anything but trying to get to the surface.

There are times when I try my hardest to swim, but the water gets too heavy or too strong. Like I'm fighting an invisible current. I choose **to act** like a competitive swimmer but all I do is struggle.

### **Wearing clothes two sizes too small**

There are times when I think that I can fit into them if I'm feeling good about myself, but once they touch my bare skin, I know it's a bad idea. Like those skinny jeans you pray and prep yourself to wear but can't get them past your thighs. **I feel** both depressed and ugly.

There are times when I think of dressing up pretty, but when I see myself in the mirror, what I see isn't what I imagined. I am unable **to think** past what I see in the mirror.

There are times when anxiety causes me to eat more than exercise, in order to feel beautiful I need to stop trying on old clothes and go shopping for new clothes. I choose **to act** like I need to continue to please one person, myself.

**Anxiety feels, thinks and acts in ways that try to submit, drown and shame me, BUT I choose to fight, swim and be beautiful.**